



Crow Country

CROW TRIBAL COUNCIL

JUL 21 2001

P.O. Box 159
Crow Agency, Montana 59022
(406) 638-2601

ROUTE
Received
Devils Tower NM
JUL 12 2001

<input type="checkbox"/>	Superintendent	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Admin. Officer	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Admin. Asst.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chief Ranger	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vis. Use Asst.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Res. Man. Spec.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Biotech	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chief of Interp.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Park Ranger	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fac. Manager	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maint. Worker	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maint. Worker	
<input type="checkbox"/>	File	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Return to:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss	

Due Date: _____

GMP

DETO Planning
Devil's Tower National Monument
P.O. Box 10
Devils' Tower, WY 82714

Chas Cartwright,

Does anyone really know what Devils' Tower is all about? The Apsaalooke (Crow) have been in the vicinity some two thousands plus years ago. We know where we came from, we know where we've been and we know who we are. We are not a group of people that the U.S. Government took pity on and established a reservation through executive order.

We transgressed through several eras before we became who we are. Our ancestral territory would encompass the Ohio Valley, the Great Lakes region, the Northern and Southern Plains to points in Canada and Mexico. But pursuant to the Treaty of September 7, 1851, we very politely claim the areas established by our great leader, Sits In The Middle Of The Land.

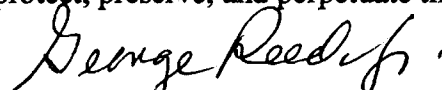
On that late summer day, September 7, 1851, our great leader designated the area where his four base teepee poles touched the ground as Apsaalooke Country. Where the Elk River joins the Big River, Williston, N.D., the Big Saddle in the Black Hills, about Rapid City, S.D., Pohpohchaashe on the ridge, Continental Divide, along the ridge to the source of the Big River (Missouri). For the past 150 years we, the Apsaalooke have always understood the designated area as our lands. The treaty was distorted to say: Where the powder River joins the Elk River, some Little Shale Knoll east of Casper, Wy, to the headwaters of the Powder River and along the Mussellshell River to its origin.

We, the Apsaalooke, claim all the activity that took place within these boundaries within the past two thousand years. To ask other tribes in the United States to speak in our behalf is an insult, a slap in the face, for they know nothing about my way of life. The Apsaalooke do not disturb sacred or religious sites, to disturb them is sacrilege.

Our norms, mores and belief-ways are all intact; a way of life that has persevered and survived oppression, suppression, persecution and practical annihilation on several occasions is still thriving. We are one of the most fortunate peoples on the face of the

earth to be able to practice these ancient ways of old in a modern society. Much to our dismay the bulk of the indigenous people in this country has lost their cultural ways and language. About ninety percent of the indigenous people who were here 500 years ago are gone. The few who have retained their language and culture are in the southwest region of the United States. There is much identity seeking and restoration of cultural ways which is good but then it is not so good because there is a lot of improvisations. We do not do things for the sake of doing things, there is meaning behind all of our actions.

Grizzly Bear Lodge has always been within the confines of Apsaalooke Country. Grizzly Bear Lodge has always been a religious and sacred site to the Apsaalooke Nation. The Big Lodge AKA Medicine Wheel, is the origin of the Apsaalooke Sundance. It was constructed by a man named Burned Face some five hundred years ago. It has always been in Sheep Mountain, we knew it was there, we respected it and revered it, no one bothered it until the dominate society started inquiring about it and rallied a bunch of people who organized coalitions to provide funds for sustenance. What was sacred to the Apsaalooke is now a garbage dump. I am concerned that Grizzly Bear Lodge will be likewise. Where the Mountain Lies AKA Pompeys Pillar is another sacred site that will probably be contaminated and desecrated. It appears what was considered sacred to the Apsaalooke is now been contaminated by the dominant society. Within the confines of Apsaalooke Country lay the Valley of the Shields, another free for all has commenced and native peoples have come from all walks of life to lay claim and tell their version. We the Apsaalooke know and we the Apsaalooke do not disturb what is considered sacred. We leave it lay as the people before us left it, we cannot disturb or alter something that has transpired. All we ask is to protect, preserve, and perpetuate these sacred sites in their natural state.


Thank you,
Cultural Affairs Department